

SUBDIVISION PLAT COMMENTS AND REPORT



Hearing Date: 6-4-15

Town Initiated

Citizen Initiated

Applicant(s): Sammy Varnam, Agent

General Description: Review and Approval of Preliminary Plat for Sunset Beach West Subdivision

Applicable Zoning District(s): Conservation Reserve (CR-1)

APPLICATION OVERVIEW:

The Sunset Beach Planning & Inspections Department has received a preliminary plat for Planning Board review and approval. The plat is for the Sunset Beach West subdivision. As per Article 13, Section 13.01, the Planning Board serves as the approval body for qualified preliminary plats. The proposed plat was reviewed thoroughly by staff against applicable ordinance provisions. Staff has provided the following notes for Planning Board consideration.

STAFF COMMENTARY

Town Staff has reviewed the attached preliminary plat against all the technical requirements of the Town's Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) and Code of Ordinances that staff is charged with reviewing. In addition to staff review, the Planning Board has the authority to request the following items and the applicant has the duty to provide as per Article 13 of the UDO:

- 1. Profiles. When deemed necessary, profiles of all streets showing natural and finished grades drawn to scale may be required to eliminate standing water and erosion caused by excessive runoff.*
- 2. Underground Electrical Service Approval – Underground electrical service approval shall be submitted with the preliminary plat indicating that each lot has adequate land area and suitable topography to accommodate the proposed methods of electrical supply.*

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3. Water Supply and/or Sewage Disposal Approval. Where public water or public sewer is not available for extension to each lot in the subdivision, a written statement from a certified soil scientist, approved by Brunswick County, shall be submitted with the preliminary plat indicating that each lot has adequate land area and suitable topography to accommodate the proposed methods of water supply or sewage disposal.

4. Other information as deemed necessary by the Planning Board.

Regarding the items 1-3 above: Staff believes the applicant has adequately provided for items 1 and 2. Profiles are provided on the plat and electrical service is being provided for on-site and not through a provider. For item #3, staff has received a letter from a certified soil scientist regarding the suitability of soils for septic. Staff has not received a letter for the water provision. Planning Board would need to request this item if they deem it necessary or have interest.

Regarding #4 above: Staff believes there are some items that the Planning Board should be made aware of and taken into consideration that are of concern to staff. In addition, the developer is requesting relief from ordinance provisions that the Planning Board is authorized to waive. Specifically, the following should be considered:

A. The UDO requires the subdivider to provide sidewalks. The Planning Board is authorized to waive this requirement where they deem it necessary. The applicant is requesting to not provide sidewalks. The proposed sidewalk does interfere with the indicated "Primary Dune" as illustrated. CAMA regulations stipulate that primary dunes can't be disturbed as part of the development proposal.

Being that that subdivision is proposed to be gated with limited access, has a dead-end road with no anticipated thru-traffic, and provides for pedestrian facilities through the development immediately across the road, waiving the sidewalk requirement is viable. Given the above rationale, Staff believes that not requiring the sidewalk would work to ensure better, more natural storm protection by working with the existing natural dune system.

B. Article 12 of the Town's UDO regulates floodplain development. In Section 12.04 subsections (11) through (14), the ordinance contemplates the need for addressing flood-related concerns. Staff believes that it would be beneficial to address these concerns with a flood study provided by the subdivider to the Board. Specifically, staff believes it is important to have a study analyzing the impacts of fill placement on the lots relative to subsequent flood impacts; not the condition of the lots in its natural, pre-development condition.

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND INSPECTIONS

C. Staff has concerns regarding queuing or “throat distance” of automobiles for the development entrance. It is staff’s understanding that there will be enough room to queue approximately one vehicle at the gate.

The existing conditions of the street terminus currently require cars parked at the end of the road to conduct three-point turns into private driveways or to maneuver within a very limited area on the street to turn around. However, this current scenario only occurs with the few parking spaces that exist at the end of the street and have been somewhat manageable given the very limited traffic volume going towards this west end of Main St.

Staff believes that when 21 lots are added to the street system and the fact that the entrance is gated, traffic will back up during peak travel times and during peak tourist seasons. The street system and neighboring owners would be affected. To help address or alleviate these concerns, staff believes a Traffic Impact Analysis would be warranted to determine possible impacts of additional population on this section of road and allow the Board to make a more informed decision regarding traffic impacts.

SUMMARY

Staff believes the Board should consider the following in their review of this plat:

1. The possibility of waiving the sidewalk requirement or not have the sidewalk extend past the lot on which the primary dune is located.
2. The applicant conduct a comprehensive flood study for Board consideration to address any concerns relative to Section 12.04, “Provisions for Flood Hazard Reduction”. Specifically, 12.04 (A)(11)-(14). Specifically, addressing or including how lot filling or alterations would impact existing flood conditions.
3. The applicant conduct a Traffic Impact Analysis for Board consideration to study, address, and offer recommendations (if warranted) to help mitigate any identified traffic impacts resulting from extending the road through a gate at the end of Main St. and adding more population to the street system.